



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

GOVERNOR NED LAMONT

Co-Chairs Senator McCrory and Representative Currey, Ranking Members Senator Berthel and Representative McCarty, Distinguished Members of the Education Committee, I want to thank you for holding this public hearing on **HB 6663: AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE ENGLISH LEARNERS' BILL OF RIGHTS**.

This bill builds upon work that the State Department of Education has been doing for several years to ensure the parents and guardians of English learners know the services that are available to them and their children. I believe there is nothing more important to a child's education than an engaged and supportive parent or guardian, and this bill guarantees that they will have the information necessary to do so.

Specifically, the legislation directs the State Department of Education to establish an English Learner Bill of Rights that clearly and succinctly sets forth a number of existing federal and state laws and requirements including the right to attend public school regardless of immigration status; the right for parents and guardians to have a translator present at critical interactions with teachers and school administrators; and the right of an English learner student to receive support services aligned with any intervention plan that the school or school district provides to all students. Local school districts will be required to provide this information to families, so that they can more effectively advocate for their kids.

Several weeks ago, a group of parents, students, legislators and advocates held an event outside my office to propose the creation of an English Learner's Bill of Rights and explain its importance. After hearing their stories and the importance of this bill to their families, I understood. Their voices were heard in my office, and I hope we can all hear them.